



**File Code:** 1950  
**Date:** April 1, 2020

Dear Interested Party:

This project announcement letter serves to initiate scoping, “an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed” (40 CFR § 1501.7). Scoping is required for all Forest Service proposed actions, including those that would appear to be categorically excluded from further analysis and documentation in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (36 CFR 220.4(e)(1)). I request your input on the following proposed actions regarding the management of the Oklahoma Ranger Districts’ Hontubby Creek 792 Farm Bill Thinning Project.

The Forest Service proposes to promote resiliency to insect and disease infestations through the implementation of commercial timber thinning treatments to approximately 1,505 acres of loblolly pine, shortleaf pine, and mixed pine-oak stands in Sections 10-16 and 21-23, Township 4 North, Range 26 East, Le Flore County, Oklahoma (see table below and enclosed map).

Compartment #	Stand #	Stand Acres*
792	2	82
792	3	143
792	4	14
792	6	35
792	7	64
792	8	200
792	9	160
792	10	81
792	11	154
792	13	64
792	15	23
792	16	65
792	17	29
792	21	44
792	22	31
792	23	57
792	24	64
792	25	30
792	28	32
792	29	38
792	31	95
*acreage is approximate		

As required by the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) Section 605 (c) access will not include construction of permanent roads and required temporary roads will be decommissioned no later than three years after the date on which the project is completed. Design criteria would include maximizing the retention of old growth trees, retaining a diverse hardwood component, and minimizing road construction as appropriate for the forest type.

The proposed project is within the Ouachita Mountains Habitat Diversity Emphasis Management Area 14 as defined by the Revised Land and Resource Management Plan: Ouachita National



Forest Arkansas and Oklahoma (2005). These areas were designated as areas of emphasis for increasing resilience to insect infestation and disease through Section 602 of Title VI of HFRA (2003) (16 U.S.C.6591 et seq.). Section 602 was created by an amendment to HFRA in the Farm Bill of 2014.

Unless scoping identifies extraordinary circumstances, this project is within a category of actions that is excluded from documentation in an EA or an EIS; only a decision will be documented.

If you have any questions about this project or would like more information, please contact Jona Tucker at (580) 494-6402 ext. 120 or [jona.tucker@usda.gov](mailto:jona.tucker@usda.gov). Address written comments to District Ranger, 111 South State Highway 259-A, Broken Bow, OK 74728. Your comments would be most helpful if received by **May 1, 2020**.

Sincerely,



SCOTT OSBORNE  
Acting District Ranger

Enclosure: Map

